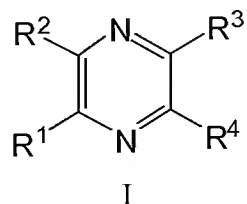


In the Claims:

The current status of all claims is listed below and supersedes all previous lists of claims.

Please amend claims 1, 7, 10, and 15-17, as follows.

1. (currently amended) A compound of formula (I):



or a pharmaceutically acceptable salt thereof, in which:

R^1 and R^2 independently represent phenyl, thienyl or pyridyl each of which is independently optionally substituted by one or more groups represented by Z;

Z represents a C_{1-8} alkyl group, a C_{1-6} alkoxy group, hydroxy, halo, trifluoromethyl, trifluoromethylthio, trifluoromethoxy, trifluoromethylsulphonyl, nitro, mono or di C_{1-3} alkylamido, C_{1-3} alkylthio, C_{1-3} alkylsulphonyl, C_{1-3} alkylsulphonyloxy, C_{1-3} alkoxycarbonyl, carboxy, cyano, carbamoyl, mono or di C_{1-3} alkyl carbamoyl, sulphamoyl, acetyl, an aromatic heterocyclic group which is optionally substituted by one or more halo, C_{1-4} alkyl, trifluoromethyl or trifluoromethoxy, or Z represents a saturated or partially unsaturated 5- to 8-membered heterocyclic group containing one or more heteroatoms selected from nitrogen, oxygen or sulphur wherein the heterocyclic group is optionally substituted by one or more C_{1-3} alkyl, hydroxy, fluoro, benzyl or an amino group $-NR^xR^y$ in which R^x and R^y independently represent H or C_{1-4} alkyl;

R^3 and R^4 independently represent a group of formula $(CH_2)_nCOOR^7$ in which n is 0, 1, 2, 3 or 4; and R^7 represents a C_{4-12} alkyl group, a C_{3-12} cycloalkyl group or a $(C_{3-12}$ cycloalkyl) C_{1-3} alkyl- group, each of which is optionally substituted by one or more of the following: a C_{1-6} alkyl, fluoro, amino or hydroxy group, or R^7 represents a group $-(CH_2)_a$ phenyl in which a is 0, 1, 2, 3 or 4 and the phenyl group is optionally substituted by one or more groups represented by Z which may be the same or different, or R^7 represents a saturated or partially unsaturated 5- to 8-membered heterocyclic group containing one or more of the following: oxygen, sulphur or nitrogen; wherein the heterocyclic group is optionally substituted by one or more C_{1-3} alkyl, C_{1-3} acyl, hydroxy, amino or benzyl groups; or

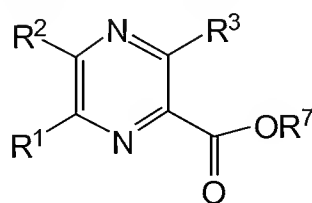
- R^3 and R^4 independently represent a group of formula $-(CH_2)_o-O-(CH_2)_p-R^8$ in which o and p independently represent an integer 0, 1, 2, 3 or 4, with the proviso that neither R^3 or R^4 is methoxy, and R^8 represents a C_{1-12} alkyl group or R^8 represents phenyl optionally independently substituted by one or more Z groups or R^8 represents an aromatic heterocyclic group or a saturated or partially unsaturated 5- to 8- membered heterocyclic group containing one or more of the following : oxygen, sulphur or nitrogen wherein each of these rings is optionally substituted by one or more groups represented by Z which may be the same or different ; or
- R^3 and R^4 independently represent a C_{1-12} alkyl group optionally substituted by one or more fluoro, hydroxy, or amino groups, provided that if R^3 is C_{1-4} alkyl then R^4 cannot be C_{1-4} alkyl or q cannot be 0 in $R^4[[,]]_i$; or
- R^3 and R^4 independently represent a group of formula $-(CH_2)_qR^9$ in which q is 0, 1, 2, 3 or 4, provided that if q is 0 in R^3 then q cannot be 0 in R^4 , and if q is 0 in R^4 then q cannot be 0 in R^3 , R^9 represents a C_{3-12} cycloalkyl group, phenyl, an aromatic heterocyclic group or a saturated or partially unsaturated 5- to 12- membered heterocyclic group containing one or more of the following: oxygen, sulphur or nitrogen, wherein each of these rings is optionally substituted by one or more groups represented by Z which may be the same or different or each of these rings is substituted by phenyl which is optionally substituted by one or more C_{1-4} alkyl, C_{1-4} alkoxy, hydroxy, halo or trifluoromethyl; or
- R^3 and R^4 independently represent a group of formula $-(CH_2)_m-O-(CO)-R^{10}$ in which m represents an integer 0, 1, 2, 3 or 4, in which R^{10} represents a C_{1-12} alkyl group optionally substituted by one or more fluoro, hydroxy, or amino groups or R^{10} represents a group of formula $-(CH_2)_qR^9$; or
- R^3 and R^4 are identical and represent a group of formula $CONR^{11}R^{12}$ in which R^{11} and R^{12} independently represent a C_{1-6} alkyl group; an (amino) C_{1-4} alkyl- group in which the amino is optionally substituted by one or more C_{1-3} alkyl groups; a $(C_{3-12}$ cycloalkyl) $(CH_2)_g$ - group wherein g is 0, 1, 2 or 3, wherein the cycloalkyl is optionally substituted by one or more fluoro, hydroxy, C_{1-3} alkyl, C_{1-3} alkoxy, C_{1-3} alkoxycarbonyl, trifluoromethyl, amino or trifluoromethoxy groups; a group $-(CH_2)_r(phenyl)_s$ in which r is 0, 1, 2, 3 or 4, s is 1, ~~when r is 0 otherwise s is 1 or 2~~ and the phenyl ~~groups are~~ group is optionally independently substituted one or more groups

represented by Z; naphthyl; anthracenyl; a saturated or partially unsaturated 5- to 8-membered heterocyclic group containing one or more heteroatoms selected from nitrogen, oxygen or sulphur wherein the heterocyclic group is optionally substituted by one or more C₁₋₃alkyl, hydroxy, fluoro, trifluoromethyl, benzyl or an amino group -NR^xR^y in which R^x and R^y independently represent H or C₁₋₄alkyl; 1-adamantylmethyl; a group -(CH₂)_t Het in which t is 0, 1, 2, 3 or 4, and the alkylene chain is optionally substituted by one or more C₁₋₃alkyl groups and Het represents an aromatic heterocyclic group optionally substituted by one, two or three groups selected from a C₁₋₅alkyl group, a C₁₋₅alkoxy group or halo; or R¹¹ represents H and R¹² is as defined above; or R¹¹ and R¹² together with the nitrogen atom to which they are attached represent a saturated or partially unsaturated 5 to 8 membered heterocyclic group containing one nitrogen and optionally one of the following: oxygen, sulphur or an additional nitrogen; wherein the heterocyclic group is optionally substituted by one or more C₁₋₃alkyl, hydroxy, fluoro, trifluoromethyl, trifluoromethoxy, benzyl, C₁₋₆alkanoyl or an amino group -NR^xR^y in which R^x and R^y independently represent H or C₁₋₄alkyl;

with the provisos that

- 1) when R³ and R⁴ are both a group of formula CONR¹¹R¹² then they do not represent carbamoyl, or mono or di C₁₋₃alkylcarbamoyl, [[and]]
 - 2) when R¹, R² and R³ each represent phenyl then R⁴ is not benzyl, and
 - 3) when one of R³ or R⁴ is C₁₋₄alkyl then the other is not a group -(CH₂)_qR⁹ in which q is 0.
2. (original) A compound according to claim 1, wherein R¹ and R² are phenyl optionally substituted by one or more groups Z.
 3. (previously presented) A compound according to claim 1, wherein R¹ and R² are both 4-chlorophenyl.
 4. (previously presented) A compound according to claim 1, wherein R³ and R⁴ independently represent a group of formula COOR⁷ in which R⁷ is a C₄₋₈alkyl group.

5. (previously presented) A compound according to claim 1, wherein R^3 represents a group of formula $COOR^7$ in which R^7 is a C_{4-8} alkyl group and R^4 represents a group of formula $-(CH_2)_o-O-(CH_2)_p-R^8$ in which o and p independently represent an integer 0, 1, 2, 3 or 4, and R^8 represents phenyl optionally independently substituted by one or more Z groups.
6. (previously presented) A compound according to claim 1, wherein R^3 and R^4 both represent a group of formula $CONR^{11}R^{12}$ in which R^{11} and R^{12} together with the nitrogen atom to which they are attached represent piperidino.
7. (currently amended) A compound according to claim 1, wherein R^3 represents a group of formula $COOR^7$ in which R^7 is a C_{4-8} alkyl group and R^4 represents a group of formula ~~R^3 and R^4 independently represent a group of formula~~ $-(CH_2)_m-O-(CO)-R^{10}$ in which m represents an integer 0, 1, 2, 3 or 4, in which R^{10} represents a C_{1-12} alkyl group optionally substituted by one or more fluoro, hydroxy, or amino groups, or R^{10} represents phenyl optionally substituted by one or more groups represented by Z which may be the same or different.
8. (previously presented) A compound according to claim 1, wherein R^3 and R^4 are identical.
9. (previously presented) A compound according to claim 1 as represented by formula II:



II

in which R^1 and R^2 are both 4-chlorophenyl;
 R^3 represents dihydrooxazolyl, (3-oxa-1-azaspiro[4.4]nonenyl), oxazolyl or tetrazol-2-ylmethyl optionally substituted by phenyl or a C_{1-4} alkyl group; and
 R^7 represents a C_{4-12} alkyl group, a C_{3-12} cycloalkyl group or a $(C_{3-12}$ cycloalkyl) C_{1-3} alkyl- group each of which is optionally substituted by one or more of the following: a C_{1-6} alkyl, fluoro, amino or hydroxy group.

10. (previously presented) A compound selected from:
2,3-bis(4-chlorophenyl)-5,6-bis(piperidin-1-ylcarbonyl)pyrazine[[,]];
bis-2,3-(*tert*-butoxy)-5,6-bis(4-chlorophenyl)pyrazine-2,3-dicarboxylate[[,]];
5,6-bis(4-chlorophenyl)-3-(4,4-dimethyl-4,5-dihydrooxazol-2-yl)-pyrazine-2-carboxylic acid *tert*-butylester[[,]];
5,6-bis(4-chlorophenyl)-3-(3-oxa-1-azaspiro[4.4]non-1-en-2-yl)-pyrazine-2-carboxylic acid *tert*-butylester[[,]];
5,6-bis(4-chlorophenyl)-3-(4-methyl-4,5-dihydrooxazol-2-yl)-pyrazine-2-carboxylic acid *tert*-butylester[[,]];
5,6-bis(4-chlorophenyl)-3-(4-methyloxazol-2-yl)-pyrazine-2-carboxylic acid *tert*-butylester[[,]];
5,6-bis(4-chlorophenyl)-3-(4-phenyloxazol-2-yl)-pyrazine-2-carboxylic acid *tert*-butylester[[,]];
~~5,6-bis(4-chlorophenyl)-3-(5-phenyl-4,5-dihydrooxazol-2-yl)-pyrazine-2-carboxylic acid *tert*-butylester, or~~
5,6-bis(4-chlorophenyl)-3-(5-phenyl-4,5-dihydrooxazol-2-yl)-pyrazine-2-carboxylic acid *tert*-butylester; and
tert-butyl 5,6-bis(4-chlorophenyl)-3-(2*H*-tetrazol-2-ylmethyl)pyrazine-2-carboxylate,
or a pharmaceutically acceptable salt thereof.

11. (cancelled).

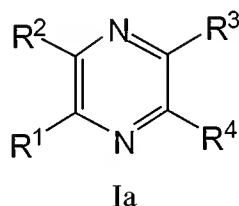
12. (previously presented) A pharmaceutical formulation comprising a compound of claim 1 and a pharmaceutically acceptable adjuvant, diluent or carrier.

13-14. (cancelled).

15. (currently amended) A method of treating obesity, ~~psychiatric disorders, psychotic disorders, schizophrenia and bipolar disorders, anxiety, anxio-depressive disorders, depression, cognitive disorders, memory disorders, obsessive-compulsive disorders, anorexia, bulimia, attention disorders, epilepsy, and related conditions, neurological disorders, neurological disorders, Parkinson's Disease, Huntington's Chorea and Alzheimer's Disease, immune, cardiovascular, reproductive and endocrine disorders, septic shock, diseases related to the~~

~~respiratory and gastrointestinal system, and extended abuse, or an addiction and/or relapse indications disorder, comprising administering a pharmacologically effective amount of a compound according to any of [[the]] claims 1, or 9-10 1, 9, or 10, or a formulation of claim 12 or a pharmaceutical formulation comprising a compound of claim 1 and a pharmaceutically acceptable adjuvant, diluent or carrier, to a patient in need thereof.~~

16. (currently amended) A method of treating obesity, ~~psychiatric disorders, psychotic disorders, schizophrenia and bipolar disorders, anxiety, anxio-depressive disorders, depression, cognitive disorders, memory disorders, obsessive-compulsive disorders, anorexia, bulimia, attention disorders, epilepsy, and related conditions, neurological disorders, neurological disorders, Parkinson's Disease, Huntington's Chorea and Alzheimer's Disease, immune, cardiovascular, reproductive and endocrine disorders, septic shock, diseases related to the respiratory and gastrointestinal system, and extended abuse, or an addiction and/or relapse indications disorder, comprising administering a pharmacologically effective amount of a compound of formula Ia, or a pharmaceutically acceptable salt thereof, to a patient in need thereof, wherein Formula Ia has the formula:~~



in which R¹ and R² independently represent phenyl, thienyl, or pyridyl, each of which is independently optionally substituted by one or more groups represented by Z;

Z represents a C₁₋₈alkyl group, a C₁₋₆alkoxy group, hydroxy, halo, trifluoromethyl, trifluoromethylthio, trifluoromethoxy, trifluoromethylsulphonyl, nitro, mono or di C₁₋₃alkylamido, C₁₋₃alkylsulphonyl, C₁₋₃alkylsulphonyloxy, C₁₋₃alkoxycarbonyl, carboxy, cyano, carbamoyl, mono or di C₁₋₃alkyl carbamoyl, sulphamoyl, acetyl, an aromatic heterocyclic group which is optionally substituted by one or more halo, C₁₋₄alkyl, trifluoromethyl or trifluoromethoxy[.]; or Z represents a saturated or partially unsaturated 5- to 8- membered heterocyclic group containing one or more heteroatoms selected from nitrogen, oxygen, or sulphur, wherein the heterocyclic group is optionally

- substituted by one or more C₁₋₃alkyl, hydroxy, fluoro, benzyl or an amino group -NR^xR^y in which R^x and R^y independently represent H or C₁₋₄alkyl; and
- R³ and R⁴ independently represent a group of formula (CH₂)_nCOOR⁷ in which n is 0, 1, 2, 3 or 4; and R⁷ represents a C₁₋₁₂alkyl group, a C₃₋₁₂cycloalkyl group, or a (C₃₋₁₂cycloalkyl)C₁₋₃alkyl- group, each of which is optionally substituted by one or more of the following: a C₁₋₆alkyl, fluoro, amino, or hydroxyl group, or R⁷ represents a group -(CH₂)_aphenyl in which a is 0, 1, 2, 3 or 4, and the phenyl group is optionally substituted by one or more groups represented by Z which may be the same or different, or R⁷ represents a saturated or partially unsaturated 5- to 8- membered heterocyclic group containing one or more of the following: oxygen, sulphur or nitrogen[[;]], wherein the heterocyclic group is optionally substituted by one or more C₁₋₃alkyl, C₁₋₃acyl groups, hydroxy, amino or benzyl groups; or
- R³ and R⁴ independently represent a group of formula -(CH₂)_o-O-(CH₂)_p- R⁸ in which o and p independently represent an integer 0, 1, 2, 3 or 4 and R⁸ represents a C₁₋₁₂alkyl group or R⁸ represents phenyl optionally independently substituted by one or more Z groups or R⁸ represents an aromatic heterocyclic group or a saturated or partially unsaturated 5- to 8- membered heterocyclic group containing one or more of one following: oxygen, sulphur, or nitrogen, wherein each of these rings is optionally substituted by one or more groups represented by Z which may be the same or different; or
- R³ and R⁴ independently represent a C₁₋₁₂alkyl group optionally substituted by one or more fluoro, hydroxy, or amino groups; or
- R³ and R⁴ independently represent a group of formula -(CH₂)_qR⁹ in which q is 0, 1, 2, 3 or 4, and R⁹ represents a C₃₋₁₂cycloalkyl group, phenyl, an aromatic heterocyclic group or a saturated or partially unsaturated 5- to 8- membered heterocyclic group containing one or more of one following: oxygen, sulphur, or nitrogen, wherein each of these rings is optionally substituted by one or more groups represented by Z which may be the same or different; or
- R³ and R⁴ independently represent a group of formula -(CH₂)_m-O-(CO)- R¹⁰ in which m represents an integer 0, 1, 2, 3 or 4, in which R¹⁰ represents a C₁₋₁₂alkyl group optionally substituted by one or more fluoro, hydroxy, or amino groups, or R¹⁰ represents a group of formula -(CH₂)_qR⁹; or

R^3 and R^4 independently represent a group of formula $\text{CONR}^{11}\text{R}^{12}$ in which R^{11} and R^{12} independently represent a C_{1-6} alkyl group; an (amino) C_{1-4} alkyl- group in which the amino is optionally substituted by one or more C_{1-3} alkyl; a $(\text{C}_{3-12}\text{cycloalkyl})(\text{CH}_2)_g$ - group wherein g is 0, 1, 2 or 3, wherein the cycloalkyl is optionally substituted by one or more fluoro, hydroxy, C_{1-3} alkyl, C_{1-3} alkoxy, C_{1-3} alkoxycarbonyl, trifluoromethyl, amino or trifluoromethoxy groups; a group $-(\text{CH}_2)_r(\text{phenyl})_s$ in which r is 0, 1, 2, 3 or 4, s is 1, ~~when r is 0, otherwise s is 1 or 2~~ and the phenyl ~~groups are~~ group is optionally independently substituted one or more groups represented by Z ; naphthyl; anthracenyl; a saturated or partially unsaturated 5- to 8- membered heterocyclic group containing one or more heteroatoms selected from nitrogen, oxygen, or sulphur, wherein the heterocyclic group is optionally substituted by one or more C_{1-3} alkyl, hydroxy, fluoro, trifluoromethyl, benzyl or an amino group $-\text{NR}^x\text{R}^y$ in which R^x and R^y independently represent H or C_{1-4} alkyl; 1-adamantylmethyl; a group $-(\text{CH}_2)_t\text{Het}$ in which t is 0, 1, 2, 3 or 4, and the alkylene chain is optionally substituted by one or more C_{1-3} alkyl groups and Het represents an aromatic heterocyclic group optionally substituted by one, two or three groups selected from a C_{1-5} alkyl group, a C_{1-5} alkoxy group or halo; or R^{11} represents H and R^{12} is as defined above; or R^{11} and R^{12} together with the nitrogen atom to which they are attached represent a saturated or partially unsaturated 5- to 8- membered heterocyclic group containing one nitrogen and optionally one of the following: oxygen, sulphur, or an additional nitrogen $[[;]]_1$ wherein the heterocyclic group is optionally substituted by one or more C_{1-3} alkyl groups, hydroxy, fluoro, trifluoromethyl, trifluoromethoxy, benzyl, C_{1-6} alkanoyl or an amino group $-\text{NR}^x\text{R}^y$ in which R^x and R^y independently represent H or C_{1-4} alkyl;

with the proviso that when one of R^3 and R^4 is a C_{1-3} alkyl group, a C_{1-3} alkoxymethyl group, trifluoromethyl, a hydroxy C_{1-3} alkyl group, C_{1-3} alkoxycarbonyl, carboxy, carbamoyl, or mono or di C_{1-3} alkylcarbamoyl then the other does not represent a group of formula $\text{CONR}^{11}\text{R}^{12}$.

17. (currently amended) A for the treatment of obesity comprising administering a pharmacologically effective amount of a compound of any of ~~[[the]] claims 1, or 9-10~~ 1, 9, or 10,

~~or a formulation of claim 12~~ or a pharmaceutical formulation comprising a compound of claim 1
and a pharmaceutically acceptable adjuvant, diluent or carrier, to a patient in need thereof.